

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute currently amended claims 27-31 for the same-numbered corresponding claims previously presented in the application, and add claims 33-38 to the application:

1. - 26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) A hammer for releasably retaining nails of varying sizes, said hammer comprising:

a handle;

a hammerhead affixed to said handle, said hammerhead comprising a plurality of nail-retention grooves of predetermined sizes located on flattened side surfaces and at least one nail-retention groove of a predetermined size located on a bottom surface of said hammerhead configured so as to align corresponding selected nails toward a nail striking orientation; wherein each of said nail-retention grooves is dimensioned to releasably accept both a shaft of a nail and a head of a nail,

wherein each of said grooves comprising:

a partially cylindrical nail body groove portion of substantially uniform radius within said side surface,

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a nail-head groove portion contiguous to said partially cylindrical nail body groove portion configured such that the head of the nail is partially enveloped by said nail-head groove portion, and

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at least one groove on at least one of said side surfaces or on an upper side surface of said hammerhead or any combination thereof, said at least one groove being transversely oriented across said side surfaces; and

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a magnetic core, disposed within said hammerhead, in magnetic

communication with each of said nail-retention grooves.

28. (Currently Amended) The hammer according to claim 27, wherein said magnetic core comprises multiple magnets, wherein each of said nail retention grooves includes at least one magnet embedded therein.

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29. (Currently Amended) The hammer according to claim 27, wherein said nail-head groove portion is partially frustoconical shaped.

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30. (Currently Amended) The hammer according to claim 27, further comprising:

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a pair of flared claws with an inner side portion height and an outer side portion height, wherein said inner side portion height is greater than said outer side portion height such that a rounded upper surface of said flared claws slants downward with respect to a longitudinal median of said hammerhead top surface;

said claws each having a claw end defining an interior nail removal void with a width that diminishes into said hammerhead, each of said nail removal voids forming an axis of substantial symmetry that converges with the other,

wherein each of said nail-removal voids is transversely angled such that said nail removal void includes a variable elevation that allows said nail-removal void to be substantially co-planar with the nail-removal surface while said hammerhead is rolled from said claw toward said striking face along said rounded upper surface.

31. (Currently Amended) The hammer according to claim 30, wherein said rounded upper surface possesses a degree of rounding that continues from said claws to said striking face.

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32. (Canceled)

33. (Newly Added) 1. A hammer for releasably retaining nails of varying sizes, said hammer comprising:

a handle; and

a hammerhead including a pair of curved claws, a curved claw body, a throat, a neck, and a striking face,

wherein said curved claws have a small curved claw end and a larger curved claw end,

wherein said face and said throat have a nail holder and starter comprised of a plurality of side vertical slots and at least one bottom vertical slot for holding and starting nails for hammering, thereby permitting placement of nails of diverse size, length and width, and

wherein said side vertical slots have small magnets attached about said side vertical slots for magnetic attraction of nails to said side vertical slots, wherein said at least one bottom vertical slot has at least one small magnet attached about said at least one bottom vertical slot for magnetic attraction of at least 1 nail to said at least one bottom vertical slot, and each of said side vertical slots and said at least one bottom vertical slot adapted for straightening the nails when hammering and being a side self-releasing groove.

34. (Newly Added) The hammer according to claim 33, wherein each of said side vertical slots and said at least one bottom vertical slot includes a half conical shape design on top of each slot so as to slide off the nail head away from said hammer during upswing.

35. (Newly Added) The hammer according to claim 33, further comprising an eye.

36. (Newly Added) The hammer according to claim 33, wherein said neck includes an indentation.

37. (Newly Added) The hammer according to claim 36, wherein each of said side vertical slots and said at least one bottom vertical slot includes a half conical shape design on top of each slot so as to slide off the nail head away from said hammer during upswing.

38. (Newly Added) The hammer according to claim 36, further comprising an eye.